

Preparation: Module 4 Discussion Questions and Reflections

Purpose

AP Seminar introduces students to academic and professional literature that is complex, argumentative, and methodological. Some texts may stretch students beyond the typical reading of the literary and textbook materials in their other courses. As a result, it is expected that students will need to develop reading strategies for expository reading while also developing practice in developing inquiries. Technical Reading Questions and Reflections assignments ask students to record and further develop questions for discussion as they emerge in their active readings of the texts. Once questions are developed, students should reflect and respond to their own questions. These reflections should be relatively informal but should explore the depths of the reading, the difficulties emerging as they lead to the student's question(s), and note the complexities, relevant interpretations, implications, etc. These questions and reflections serve as good preparation for discussions of the texts in a class setting and as good practice for developing the kinds of curiosity that lead to good research questions for tasks later on.

In the Classroom: Set-up

Teachers may choose to apply the assignment in this module as in Modules 2 and 3 or use the following suggestion for Module 4.

What To Do

Unlike previous modules where sources were discussed fully in isolation, Module 4 focuses on the synthesis of conversation across sources. To prepare for full-class discussion and brainstorming of the broad themes of the provided materials, students should take notes individually for each source. Once all sources have been engaged individually, students should look for broadly-connecting themes, areas of agreement or disagreement, or lines of reasoning and inquiry that flow between two or more sources and provide commentary for such in their notes. Students are expected to reference these notes in the full-class discussion that follows this exercise.

At the end of the class discussion, students will then follow standard protocol by crafting 2-3 discussion questions in relation to the *synthesis* of materials as discussed in class. Questions should not simply concern factual curiosities arising from engagement with or discussion of the materials, nor should generated questions be answerable by a simple internet search. Instead, student-generated questions should demonstrate careful consideration of the materials and

facilitate further inquiry-based approaches, other concepts or studies, or real-world applications (note that the materials should themselves be used as a jumping-off point).

Students must then give considerate reflections of their thoughts to their discussion questions to put their own opinions and biases “down on paper” for the sake of putting them aside for the inquiry process. Reflections to questions generated from a lack of understanding should justify the lack, explore the reason for the lack, and make some educated assumptions about what might *fill* that lack or a way to go about doing so. Questions about broadening the inquiry for the sake of discussion can be explored by addressing the student’s opinions on the matter but should reflect an openness to alternative perspectives.